



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: July 29, 2003

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Planning Division, Community Development Department

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR CONTRACT APPROVAL - NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION ORDINANCE UPDATE - RRM DESIGN GROUP

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- A. Authorize the City Administrator to approve a contract for the services of RRM Design Group to update the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance and the Single Family Residential Design Guidelines at a total cost for services not to exceed \$85,000; and
- B. Allocate \$8,500 from the FY 2003 General Fund Appropriated Reserve to the Community Development Department for project contingency costs.

DISCUSSION:

The Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO) was adopted in late 1991 and expanded the purview of the Architectural Board of Review (ABR), and in some cases the Planning Commission, to include the review of proposed single-family residences based on certain size thresholds. The NPO also established and mapped the Hillside Design District and required review in these districts. The NPO applies only to single-family and one-story duplex residential development on in-fill or hillside lots.

Over the past decade, a number of problems have arisen with the implementation of the NPO and it has become increasingly clear that it has not fully met public expectations regarding neighborhood preservation and in particular, the issues of "mansionization" and hillside development. The lack of a clear definition of neighborhood compatibility has led to lengthy public ABR hearings, disagreements between the public and the ABR, and appeals of ABR decisions. A clarification of the design terminology (height, bulk, scale), additional tools for design analysis, and a better understanding of what constitutes neighborhood compatibility are needed to re-establish a community-wide consensus on neighborhood preservation issues. The update to the NPO intends to achieve these important objectives.

REVIEWED BY: _____ Finance _____ Attorney

Agenda Item No. _____

On April 29, 2003, this same contract proposal was before the Council. Council voted three to three on a motion not to proceed with the contract. Because the vote on the motion was split, it resulted in no action being taken. Council requested that Staff return with the NPO contract at a time when all seven members of Council would be present.

Using outside professional services is necessary at this time in order to accomplish this objective without delaying it and other priority work items in the Planning Division, including: the Historic Resources Demolition Protection Ordinance, ABR Guideline Updates; Historic & Architectural Resource Surveys, Creek Policy Update; Inclusionary Housing; the Housing Element Update, Highway 101 Implementation Study and others. By hiring professionals under contract, City staff will be able to keep the NPO Update moving forward and utilize design expertise that we do not have on staff in creating design guidelines.

After review of the proposals submitted in response to a Request for Proposal (RFP), Planning Division staff selected RRM Design Group for their depth of experience and expertise in architecture/urban design, facilitation of public input and preparation of design guidelines. We were particularly impressed with their experience with the "mansions" issue in single-family residential neighborhoods. Certain tasks will involve substantial work by City staff, including compiling research from more than ten years of experience with the NPO, and meeting participation.

Staff has negotiated an acceptable contract with RRM that will result in recommendations for revisions to the NPO, recommendations on procedures for the review of projects and a completely revised Single Family Residential Design Guidelines document.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The contract amount is \$84,954.00, which has already been appropriated by Council for this purpose. In addition, some contingency funding (10%, or \$8,500) is requested to cover potential increased costs associated with the project, such as: public outreach, meeting facilities, and/or production of guidelines.

ATTACHMENT: Scope of Work/Fee Schedule

PREPARED BY: Bettie Hennon, City Planner

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Casey, Community Development Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office